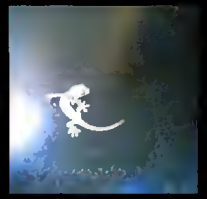

made it to the last volume. Thank you very much for reading!

Tokage

AK HAIBARA

AK HAIBARA

Tokage

Tokage

TOKAGE

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Tokage

TOKAGE

A SPIRIT CURSED WITH IMMORTALITY AFTER DEVOURING THE PRIESTESS KAZURA DURING THE RITUAL IN WHICH A GOD DESCENDED INTO HER EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS AGO. IT POSSESSES THE DECEASED YUUKA'S BODY AND IS SEARCHING FOR KAZURA'S REINCARNATION TO SEARCH FOR A WAY TO BREAK ITS CURSE

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS

HEAD MONK

SHINOBU'S GRANDFATHER AND ALSO THE HEAD PRIEST OF A SHRINE. THOUGH HE KNOWS THE TRUE IDENTITY OF TOKAGE AND THE LEGEND BEHIND IT, HE SHELTERS IT.

SHINOBU

A BOY WHO LIVES WITH HIS GRANDFATHER, THE HEAD MONK, AND DEARLY MISSES YUUKA, WHOM HE LOVED LIKE AN OLDER SISTER AND WHO HAD DIED IN A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT BECAUSE HER LAST THOUGHTS WERE FOCUSED ON HIM. HE'S THE TOUCHSTONE THAT TOKAGE GAINS SPIRITUAL POWER FROM.

KASHIMA

A TRANSFER STUDENT WHO IS IN SHINOBU'S CLASS. HE FIRST APPROACHED SHINOBU AND TELLS HIM THAT HE HAS A STRONG SPIRITUAL SENSE, BUT HIS GOAL IS STILL UNKNOWN.

SHUNKEI

THE HEAD MONK'S PUPIL. HE WAS CALLED BACK FROM TRAINING TO WATCH TOKAGE AND GUARD OVER SHINOBU.

SAKAKI

A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL FROM THE SUPERNATURAL DISASTER COUNTERMEASURES (SDC) OFFICE WHICH IS A PART OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEPARTMENT. SHE IS IN CHARGE OF CAPTURING THE TOKAGE, WHO IS DISTURBING THE SPIRITUAL BALANCE OF THE COUNTRY

SUMMARY

TOKAGE: A SOUL THAT SHOULDN'T EXIST IN THIS WORLD, A SPIRIT OF THE DEAD CURSED WITH IMMORTALITY.

TOKAGE IS THE SPIRIT INHABITING THE BODY OF YUUKA, WHOM SHINOBU LOVED LIKE AN OLDER SISTER. WHILE SHINOBU IS STILL CONFUSED BY ITS EXISTENCE, HE BECAME THE TOUCHSTONE THAT GRANTS TOKAGE ITS SPIRITUAL STRENGTH. HE IS DRAWN INTO THE BATTLES WITH PEOPLE AFTER TOKAGE'S FLESH AND WITH SAKAKI WHO PRESIDES OVER THE SUPERNATURAL DISASTER COUNTERMEASURES OFFICE. DURING THESE EVENTS, SHINOBU CATCHES GLIMPSES OF ITS SUFFERING. HE SLOWLY GROWS FOND OF TOKAGE, BUT TOKAGE HAS SUFFERED EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE AND SO, PUSHES EVERYONE AWAY. TOKAGE IS SEARCHING FOR THE REINCARNATION OF ITS TWIN SISTER, KAZURA, WHO IS ALSO THE SOURCE OF ITS CURSE. AND NOW, A BOY, KASHIMA, WHO CARRIES THE BIRTHMARK THAT MARKS HIM AS KAZURA, APPEARS. .

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RATTLE
...A GUEST?

GOOD EVENING.

I DIDN'T EXPECT TO HAVE A GUEST AT A TIME LIKE THIS
I MUST MAKE SURE TO CLOSE UP PROPERLY NEXT TIME
RUSTLE
CLOSE UP?
OH,
YOU MEAN *THIS?*
FWP
YOU PUT UP A BARRIER AROUND THIS SHRINE DIDN'T YOU?
YOU'RE THINKING IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN HARD TO FIND

YOUR ADORABLE GRANDSON?
OR MAYBE...
BOTH?
WHAT IS IT THAT YOU'RE TRYING TO HIDE?
THE TOKAGE?
Tz
Zz
THIS BARRIER IS LIKE CHILD'S PLAY THOUGH.
IT WON'T WORK ON ANYTHING OTHER THAN CRAPPY LOW LEVEL SPIRITS
HEY...

WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM?
!!
NOTHING.
HE'S JUST SLEEPING
IT'S MY *RULE* TO NOT DIRECTLY LAY MY HAND ON LIVING HUMANS.
WHO...
ARE YOU?

DID YOU PURPOSELY LET THE BARRIER WEAKEN?
OR WERE YOU TRYING TO BE KIND?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
<SLAM>
YOU LOWLY HUMAN
WATCH YOUR MOUTH.
CLATTER
COUGH
COUGH

WITH THE TOKAGE HERE,
THE MAGNETIC FIELD IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE DIS TORTED
THIS IS A WARNING
LISTEN UP.
DON'T TRY ANYTHING FUNNY.
THE ONLY THING YOU CAN DO
IS TO STRENGTHEN THE BARRIER

AT ITS CURRENT STATE THE BARRIER CAN BE BROKEN.
YOUR CHOICES ARE EITHER TO STRENGTHEN THE BARRIER...
...OR TO CHASE OUT THE TOKAGE.
YOU HAVE A FEW YEARS LEFT.
THEY WOULD BE BETTER PUT TO USE IF YOU SPEND THEM WITH YOUR GRANDSON RIGHT?
DON'T GET INVOLVED WITH THE TOKAGE ANYMORE.
THAT THING...
IS A CALAMITY.

IT CAN NEVER BE FORGIVEN
YOU HUMANS SHOULDN'T CONCERN YOURSELVES WITH IT
IT...
...IS MINE.
I THINK WE'VE TALKED TOO MUCH
I'LL BE HEADING BACK NOW
BYE.

STRUGGLE MORE AND MORE
TOKAGE
CRAWL UNSIGHTLY OVER THE EARTH...
AND DESPAIR OVER YOUR UNDYING SELF.
THE END IS STILL FAR OFF

IF I UNDO THE CURSE?
I TOLD YOU THAT I'D GIVE BACK THE BODY.
I had a conversation like this once
WHAT'S WITH YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN?
I DON'T MEAN THAT.
WHEN YOU SAY "UNDO THE CURSE."
ESSENTIALLY, YOU MEAN...

FWIP
Sigh.
I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU.
BUT, SIMPLY PUT, I JUST HAVE TO BE KILLED BY
KILLED ...?
FROM THE START, I'M A BORROWED LIFE...
IN A BORROWED BODY.
PERHAPS I SHOULD SAY THAT I'M JUST RETURNING WHAT'S NOT MINE
RUSTLE

THAT'S THE QUICKEST WAY
BUT...
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT YOU'LL BE KILLED ... SO EASILY?
HOW ABOUT YOU?
THEN,
I'LL GIVE THE BODY BACK TO YOU SO IF I TELL YOU TO KILL ME, WHAT WILL YOU DO?
...OF COURSE THERE'S NO WAY ...
I CAN DO THAT!!

WHO WOULD BE ABLE TO DO SUCH A THING, NORMALLY?!
EVEN IF YOU CAN'T DO IT, AS LONG AS SHE DOES IT, THEN IT'S FINE
IT'D MAKE HER A MURDERER...
DON'T THINK OF THIS ON THE SCALE OF A 'NORMAL HUMAN BEING'
EVEN IF I'M KILLED, SHE WON'T BE CHARGED WITH A CRIME OR ANYTHING.

MY EXISTENCE ITSELF IS A STRAIN—A DISTORTION.
I'M NOT HUMAN ANY MORE AND THIS BODY'S A CORPSE.
(RUSTLE)
IF I'M HERE, THE MAGNETIC FIELD IS THE [illegible] INTO CHAOS AND STRANGE PEOPLE DROP BY.
AND ON TOP OF THAT, I'M TIRED OF BEING HURT.
IF THE CURSE IS UNDONE AND I DIE, ISN'T IT THE SOLUTION TO EVERYONE'S PROBLEMS?

Then...
Then, what about you...?
YUUKA'S BODY CAN FINALLY BE PUT TO REST IN A GRAVE.
AND YOU CAN STOP WORRYING SINCE I'D BE GONE.
STRANGE PEOPLE WON'T COME BY ANYMORE
IT'S OPTIMIZING THE GREATEST NUMBER OF POSITIVES

Dying...
...IDIOT.
WHAT ARE YOU SCARED ABOUT?
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE THE ONE DOING IT.

...felt like life and death were part of a different world.

I still didn't...

Chapter Sixteen
YOU'RE BLEEDING!
TOKAGE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
SHUT UP!
CLUNK
(SLAM)
THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN
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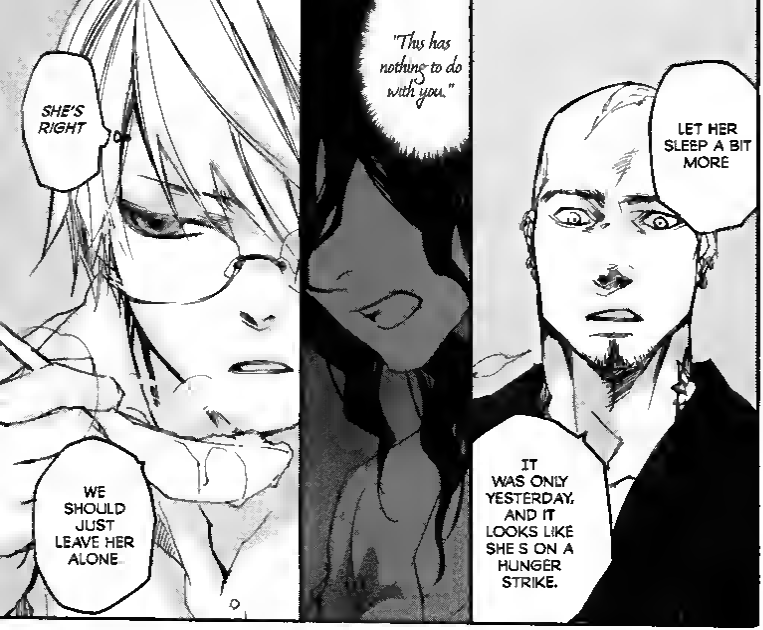
"This has nothing to do with you."
BRRRR
BRRR
BRRR
BRRR
BRRR
BRRR
SLAM
HMM?
MM
Flop
AH!

You have bed hair
OH, HEY!
YOU'RE UP!
SHUNKE!?
CLATTER
GRANDPA, SORRY!
YOUR BREAK-FAST
Dish
IN A HURRY
(STOMP)
HE'S STILL IN THE MAIN BUILDING
HAVE YOUR MORNING PORRIDGE
HUH? WHERE'S GRANDPA?
WHERE'S THE TOKAGE?
CLINK
THANKS FOR THE MEAL


SHE'S RIGHT
"This has nothing to do with you."
LET HER SLEEP A BIT MORE
WE SHOULD JUST LEAVE HER ALONE
IT WAS ONLY YESTERDAY, AND IT LOOKS LIKE SHE S ON A HUNGER STRIKE.

HE'S NOT BEING FUSSY TODAY
RUSTLE
OH DONE ALREADY?
I'M GOING TO BE LATE
THUMP
TOKAGE CAN LEAVE IF SHE WANTS TO AT ANY TIME
THANKS FOR THE MEAL

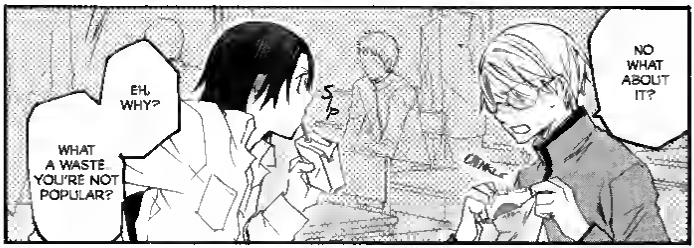
OH? HE'S NOT BEING FUSSY ABOUT GOING TODAY
GRAND-FATHER
BE CAREFUL!
I'LL BE GOING NOW
NO, IT'S FINE. IT'S GREAT THAT YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.
?
?
...? WHAT ABOUT?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
OK...
SIGH
I'LL COUNT ON YOU FOR EVERY-THING
I WILL BE AT THE MAIN BUILDING FOR TODAY

Why, it's getting cold.
DON'T LET TOKAGE BE HASTY AND LEAVE
OK.
MASTER, I'VE WANTED TO ASK
(CRUNCH)
WHY HAVE YOU DECIDED TO SHELTER THE TOKAGE NOW?
EVEN IF SHE LOOKS LIKE A GIRL YOU'RE RELATED TO, SHE'S STILL...
MM.
YOU'RE RIGHT
Fuah, fuah!
IS THIS FATE AS WELL?
HE DODGED THE QUESTION

IT MAY HAVE BEEN SOMETHING INEVITABLE
DAMN, I'M LATE!
"This has nothing to do with you."
Pant
IRRITATED
SHE'S ABSO-LUTELY RIGHT

I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HER...
MIYAMOTO!
THANKS FOR YESTERDAY! IT WAS FUN
HUH, NO PACKED LUNCH?
CAN I HAVE SOME TODAY, TOO THEN?

MIYAMOTO, DO YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND?
CRINKLE
HUH?
I WAS AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL BEFORE THIS, BUT STILL...
AN ALL-BOYS SCHOOL HAS NO CLASS AT ALL SERIOUSLY!


EH, WHY?
WHAT A WASTE. YOU'RE NOT POPULAR?
SIP
CRINKLE
NO WHAT ABOUT IT?

AH HA HA, REALLY!
DON'T HAVE ANYONE YOU LIKE?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM? HE'S SO IRRITATING...
I JUST... DON'T FEEL LIKE HAVING ONE

I'M DEFINITELY ALL FOR OLDER GIRLS..
THE ONES WHO ARE A BIT UPTIGHT PERSONALITY-WISE..
AND HAVE LARGE BREASTS AND A NICE BODY...
THERE'S..!

ARE YOU FREE TODAY?
THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK YOU ABOUT

...

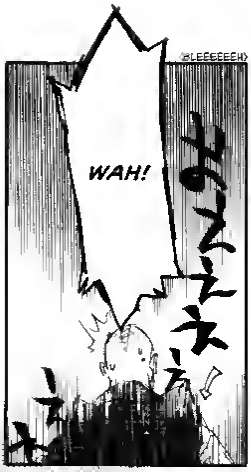
FINE BY ME.

RUSTLE
(BOOM)
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
MMM...?

I CAN'T MOVE...
dizzy
I FEEL HEAVY
AW, CRAP I OVER-SLEPT
I HAVE TO... GO COOK...
thump

NO MATTER HOW I LOOK AT IT, THIS IS WEIRD
UP!
WHOA
WHOA
shatter
MY HEAD HURTS...
...HA HA...
EVEN THOUGH I'M A CORPSE AND ALL
RUTH
RUTH

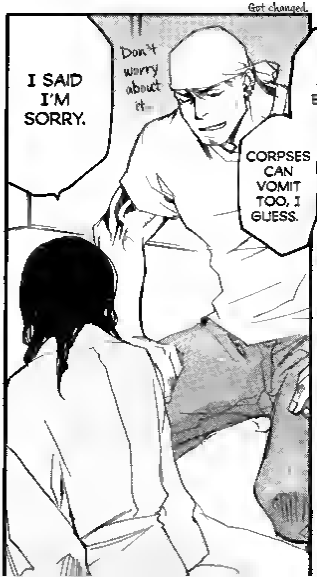
OH? YOU'RE UP!
PICK UP
WHOA
(SWAY)
SHUNKEI
!!
LET GO
DIDN'T I SAY TO LEAVE ME ALONE?
NOPE YOU'RE SWAYING ALL OVER THE PLACE
DAMN! AND I DON'T HAVE TIME TO BE SLUGGISH HERE...
And up we go!
WHAT IS THIS...?
OFF TO BED FOR YOU!
PANT PANT
IT'S LIKE THERE'RE WAVES...


(SLEEEEEEH)
WAH!
おえええ
Gahhhhhh!

LOOK HORRIBLE...?
UUP
?

YOU LOOK HORRIBLE. ARE YOU OK?
YOU'RE A CORPSE, THOUGH.
It looks kinda like a hangover.

...THIS IS JUST AS THOUGH I WERE HUMAN.


I SAID I'M SORRY.
Don't worry about it.

Got changed.

OH BOY
CORPSES CAN VOMIT TOO, I GUESS.

DAMN
Pub
MY HEAD AND MY EYES HURT, TOO.
IT'S 'CAUSE YOU CRIED AND SCREAMED THAT MUCH BEFORE COLLAPSING
HMM.
I DON'T REALLY GET SOMETHING SO COMPLI-CATED,
BUT ISN'T IT A GOOD THING THAT YOU'RE BECOMING MORE HUMAN?
...HAH...
IT'S NOT SOMETHING SO SIMPLE...
rustle
rustle
WHERE'S SHINOBU?

HE WENT TO SCHOOL
SCHOOL?
OH, RIGHT! THAT GUY FROM YESTERDAY..
ARISE
(CRACK)
HEY!
STOP!
I'M TELLING YOU TO STOP—
Ow ow ow ow ow!
GLITTER
GLITTER
GLITTER
GLITTER
(SHOVE)

Ah!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
(TCHK)
SLAM
(CLATTER)
WHERE'S GRAMPS?
AH?
OH,
HE SAID THE BARRIERS HAVE GOTTEN FRAGILE OR SOMETHING SO HE WENT TO THE MAIN BUILDING THIS MORNING...
Damn! I didn't notice!
WHOOSH
AH, HEY!
IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE!

O-OK.
SHUNKEI BRING ME GRAMPS'S SWORD FROM THE MAIN BUILDING
FOUND THE TOKAGE!
LET US HAVE THAT BODY, TOO!
YOU REPULSIVE TOKAGE
(SWISH)
WHEN DID THEY GET HERE, TOO...?
TOKAGE
(CRAWL)
(CRAWL)

"...Good thing...?"
IT'S A GOOD THING SHINOBU'S AT SCHOOL...
...
Ah!
How HIDEOUS.
TOKAGE.
EVEN IF YOU PRETEND TO BE HUMAN, YOU WON'T DIE.
I REALLY SHOULD'VE LEFT EARLIER
HOW UNLIKE ME.

Tokage

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

SHUNKEI
BRING ME GRAMPS'S SWORD FROM THE MAIN BUILDING
AND SINCE YOU DON'T HAVE ANY SPIRITUAL POWER, DON'T TAKE A STEP OUTSIDE
<SWISH>
WHA—
HEY!
TOKAGE!

GRAMPS, TOO HE'S BEEN CLOSED UP IN THE MAIN BUILDING SINCE YESTERDAY
JEEZ, EXPLAIN THINGS TO ME SO I GET WHAT'S GOING ON!
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT ALL OF A SUDDEN...?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
<TAH TAH>
LAST NIGHT? I STAYED OVER, RIGHT?
...?
HUH?
...AH!
CRAP! THE SWORD!
DID I SCRAPE MYSELF HERE BEFORE?
?
?
WAS I DOING SOMETHING?
...?
THE BARRIER'S GETTING WEAKER...?
WHY ALL OF A SUDDEN
?
<STOMP STOMP STOMP>

(CACKLE CACKLE CACKLE)
WHAT'S WRONG, TOUKA?
YOUR TOUCH-STONE'S NOT AROUND?
PANT
bite
YOU'LL BLEED OUT
(WIPE)
DAMN LOWLIFES!
EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN'T DIE!

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(CRACKLE)

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RIP

RIP

RIP

(BANG)

CRAP LIKE THESE GUYS HAVEN'T MANAGED TO COME IN THIS WHOLE TIME, SO WHY...

...DAMN...

WHAT IS THAT OLD MAN DOING?

I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH POWER...
(CLATTER)
TOKAGE.
YOU CAN'T CHANGE...
...INTO A MALE'S BODY, EITHER.
(CACKLE CACKLE)
(CACKLE CACKLE)
HURRY UP AND GET OUT OF THAT BODY!
TOKAGE!
LET US DEVOUR THAT FLESH!!
(CACKLE CACKLE)

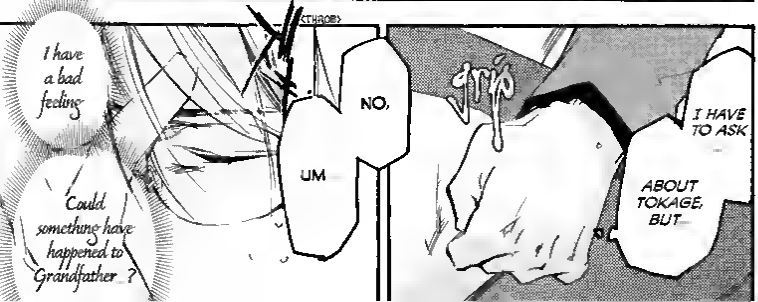
NO.
DAMN IF ONLY SHINOBU WERE HERE,
I'D BE ABLE TO—
How stupid.
AND AT A TIME LIKE THIS!

I DON'T WANT...
TO BE SEEN LIKE THIS
...HA HA.
THAT BODY
I can't die even if I want to die.
I knew I'd only regret it later on...
SMALL FRY...
...'CAUSE IT'S THE BODY...
OF HIS BELOVED YUUKA.
...if I get attached, but...
I WON'T GIVE THIS BODY TO YOU...

(BADUMP)
I shouldn't have gotten him involved.

MIYAMOTO
WHAT'D YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?
HE'S TALKING AS IF WE'RE CLOSE AGAIN...
EH,
OH...

ACTUALLY I'VE GOT SOME TIME SO WHY DON'T WE STOP BY SOME WHERE?
I'M KINDA HUNGRY, TOO


I have a bad feeling
Could something have happened to Grandfather?
UM
NO,
<THROB>
strip
I HAVE TO ASK
ABOUT TOKAGE, BUT

CLATTER
If it's not Grandfather,
then something happened to Hokaze
WHAT'S WRONG?
SORRY I HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT
IT'S MY FAULT SINCE I WAS THE ONE WHO BROUGHT IT UP
No, that's not it
HEY,
ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT THE SHRINE?
...?!
WHY...
IT SEEMS LIKE SOMETHING IS HAPPENING AT THE SHRINE
KIND OF LIKE FORESIGHT, I GUESS?
I TOLD YOU BEFORE, I JUST KNOW THESE KINDS OF THINGS
CREAK

YOU *DON'T* HAVE TO *WORRY* YOUR GRANDFATHER WILL BE *FINE.*
WHAT DO YOU MEAN...?
HA HA.
SORRY LOOKS LIKE I GOT IT WRONG
THE ONE YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT
IS THE TOKAGE, ISN'T IT?
!!

AND SO,
THAT THING YOU WANTED TO TALK TO ME ABOUT
THAT WAS ABOUT THE TOKAGE...
RIGHT?
WHY...
DON'T GET SO SURPRISED DID I GET IT RIGHT?
WHAT'S YOUR GOAL HERE?!
...WHEN ALL THIS TIME...
SO, YOU ASKED ABOUT ALL THOSE THINGS...
AND EVEN CAME TO MY HOUSE...
...YOU KNEW ABOUT TOKAGE ?!

The scar on his neck...
WHAT'S ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU?
SO IT'S AT YOUR HOUSE RIGHT NOW?
IT WASN'T LIKE THAT, REALLY.
He might be the one Tokage is looking for,
RELATION-SHIP...?
but..
(THROB)
...my head hurts
SHE'S JUST STAYING THERE
SHE DOESN'T REALLY HAVE ANY LEADS
SHE'S JUST... JUST LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WITH A SCAR...
SHE'S TRYING TO FIND SOME-ONE... BUT SHE HASN'T FOUND HER YET,
AND RIGHT NOW SHE'S AT HOME...
SO WHEN SHE SAW... YOUR SCAR LAST TIME...
What is this?
I have a bad feeling
(THROB)

ARE YOU OK?
...FINE. IT'S NOT ME; THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON AT HOME...
SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENED BEFORE, TOO, SO...
WHY AM I TALKING ABOUT THIS, TOO?
SOMEONE WHO'S AFTER THE TOKAGE MIGHT COME
That must've happen...
It hurts...
I have to let him meet Tokage, but...
SO...
Just how much do you think she's searched for him?!
THROB
I DON'T REALLY GET IT,
BUT IF IT'S BEING HUNTED,
THEN ISN'T IT EVEN MORE REASON TO JUST LEAVE IT ALONE?

BECAUSE *YOU...*
...HAVE *NOTHING* TO DO WITH ALL OF *THIS.*

"This has nothing to do with you."
Ah.
What to do?
I know.
IF YOU STICK YOUR HEAD THAT MUCH INTO IT,
YOU'LL GET YOURSELF IN DANGER.
A MONSTER LIKE THAT
SHOULD JUST BE LEFT TO DISAP-PEAR--
(SLAM)
No!

IT'S NOT TRUE THAT IT "HAS NOTHING TO DO" WITH ME!
THIS IS MY PROBLEM, TOO!
I'm tired of just waiting for things to happen.
I CHANGED MY MIND COME WITH ME TODAY
I WANT YOU TO MEET TOKAGE.
ALL RIGHT.
THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU WERE SAYING EARLIER
..HEY..

YOU DON'T GET WHAT'S GOING ON AT ALL, DO YOU?
ABOUT WHAT..?
IF NOT, THEN IT'S OK.
LET'S GO.
YOU'RE LETTING ME MEET THIS TOKAGE, RIGHT?

Tokage

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE ISSUE ABOUT YOU TAKING THE BENITORAMARU WITH NO FORE-WARNING
HOWEVER MS. SAKAKI THERE'S STILL
SLAM
WHICH IS WHY
I'M SAYING THAT THIS IS A SITUATION OF UTMOST URGENCY!
THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR THAT!
EVEN IF YOU SAY THAT..
I WOULD LIKE THE PERMISSION TO USE IT RIGHT NOW!

THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE TOKAGE CAUSES MAGNETIC FIELD DISTORTIONS! WHO KNOWS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF IT WERE FURTHER PROVOKED...!
IF THE MAGNETIC FIELD GETS DISTORTED, THEN DISASTERS WILL HAPPEN FOR SURE!
THERE ARE EVEN RECORDS OF AN ENTIRE VILLAGE BEING DECIMATED BECAUSE OF IT!
HOWEVER NOTHING HAS HAPPENED YET, SO I CAN'T GIVE YOU PERMISSION
I DON'T HAVE THAT— WHAT WAS IT CALLED AGAIN— SPIRITUAL POWER—
YOU'VE SEEN THE OMENS, HAVEN'T YOU?!
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GO AGAINST NATURE?
IT'D BE TOO LATE FOR REGRETS AFTER IT'S ALREADY HAPPENED!

IF WE DON'T MOBILIZE NOW, THEN WHY DO WE EVEN EXIST?!
MS SAKAKI
ARE YOU THIS EAGER FOR A PROMOTION? YOU ARE A WOMAN AFTER ALL
YOU SHOULD CALM DO—
(GRIT)
(SLAM)
LETTER OF RESIGNATION
!!
CAP-TAIN!!
THIS IS FOOLISH! A SALARY REDUCTION WON'T CUT IT THIS TI—
(CLACK CLACK CLACK)

Click
ARE YOU SAYING A DISASTER'S OCCURRING?
YES
Click
YAMAZAKI! SANNOMIYA!
GET THE CAR.
YES, MA'AM!
Shuuu
STUPID MASSES DON'T KNOW A DAMN THING
Click
Click
Click
THE FACT THAT NOTHING'S HAPPENED IN EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS IS WHAT'S WEIRD
Click
Click
FOR WHATEVER REASON, THE TOKAGE'S MOVEMENTS HAVE BEEN HINDERED UP UNTIL NOW
Click
THERE'S NO OTHER REASON THE CHANCES OF THIS HAP-PENING ARE TOO LOW
Click

CASU-ALTY?
What!
IS IT THE TOKAGE?
(CLATTER)
DON'T KNOW.
IT COULD BE TOKAGE, OR IT COULD BE SOMEONE ELSE.
(CLATTER)
CREAK
HURRY!
I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.
THERE HAS BEEN A CASUALTY AT THAT SHRINE
BUT IF IT WERE THE TOKAGE'S DEATH THEN IT'LL BE HORRIBLE
(RUSTLE)
DON'T TAKE THIS LIGHTLY.
PREPARE FOR THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO!
WE MUST CAPTURE IT BEFORE THAT HAPPENS!

THERE MAY HAVE BEEN CIVILIAN CASUALTIES.
ARRANGE AN AMBULANCE IN PREPARATION.
YES, MA'AM!
BUT ABOUT THE CASUALTY...
MY SIXTH SENSE HASN'T GONE OFF ON ANYTHING YET.
(CLATTER)
AS EXPECTED OF YOU
IS THIS YOUR SPIRITUAL SENSE AS THE HEAD OF THE SAKAKI FAMILY?
IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT.
IT'S A WOMAN'S INTUITION.

(THUMP)
(MURMUR MURMUR)
(MURMUR MURMUR)
I'M BLEEDING TOO MUCH
THEY'RE RIGHT
HUFF HUFF
HUFF HUFF
IT'S OVER! EVEN IF I REACH THE TOWN I CAN'T DODGE!
POLICE?
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
IS THAT BODY AT ITS LIMITS ALREADY?
YOU'RE BLEEDING QUITE A BIT.

(CHOMP)
ACK!
IF THIS BODY STOPS WORKING,
THEN I'LL HAVE TO SEARCH FOR ANOTHER...
...HA HA.
AND I FINALLY MADE IT THIS FAR!
YUUKA'S BODY IS ALL BEAT UP NOW
SNAP
OW.
BUT...
I'M GLAD THIS PLACE IS A SHRINE

CREAK...
EVEN IF I LEAVE, THIS BODY WILL STILL GET THE PROPER SERVICES.
AUGH!
TOKAGE!
WHAT IS THIS?!
The kind!
SHINOBU!
Damn it! His timing is horrible...!

YOU IDIOT!
WHY'D YOU COME BACK NOW?!
WHY? THAT'S MY QUESTION!

HOW'D IT GET LIKE THIS?
WHERE'S GRAMPS?!

...THAT PERSON YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR.
MORE IMPORTANTLY, THOSE WOUNDS
SHINOBU
WHO IS HE?

KAZURA...

DO YOU REMEMBER
TOKAGE?
YOU'RE...
SO HE IS...
THE GUY YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR?

RUKIA

Slice

(THUMP)
YOU WANTED TO DIE, DIDN'T YOU?

IS THAT BODY ALREADY AT ITS LIMITS?
GAH!
T-
TOKAGE!
COME ON,
COME ON OUT
click
click
click

WHY?!
KASHIMA?! WHAT ARE YOU...?

...NK...
YOU'RE...
...NOT KAZURA!
TOO SLOW.
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D BE DRAWN IN BY A SCAR LIKE THIS
<THUD>
I'
LOOKS LIKE...
YOUR POWER'S NOT ALL THAT GREAT EITHER
The scar's...!
TUSK

DIVINE PUNISHMENT...
IS SOMETHING FROM WHICH NO ONE CAN ESCAPE FROM NO ONE CAN BE FORGIVEN
THAT IS WHY IT IS FEARED.

TOKAGE!
TOKAGE!!
TOKAGE
DID YOU THINK YOU WERE FORGIVEN?
(COUGH)

I WON'T FORGET...
...ANY HUMAN SCUM THAT LAYS THEIR HANDS ON MY OFFERING!
...THE MOUNTAIN GOD...!!
DON'T THINK IT'LL END WITH JUST ONE VILLAGE
AND DON T FORGET THAT THAT VILLAGE WAS ALL FOR YOU ALONE
DAMN IT...
THE FACT THAT YOU'VE COME OUT AFTER ALL THIS TIME.
MEANS THAT SHE REALLY IS CLOSE, IT SEEMS.
LOOKS LIKE MY INTUITION WAS RIGHT AFTER ALL
YOU EVEN BORROWED A HUMAN BODY TO MAKE YOUR APPEARANCE

WHO KNOWS?
IT JUST MEANS THAT YOUR SIN ISN'T SOMETHING THAT CAN BE FORGIVEN JUST LIKE THAT
NOW TOKAGE
HURRY UP AND LEAVE THAT BODY!
<SHOVE>
YOU... WHY DID YOU DO SUCH A THING?
STOP IT.
IT WAS SOMETHING DECIDED— SOMETHING A NORMAL HUMAN COULDN'T INTERFERE IN
WAH!

YOU DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS, RIGHT?
I'M GETTING RID OF SOMETHING ANNOYING FOR YOU, SO YOU SHOULD BE GRATEFUL
(FLINCH)
TOKAGE!
YOUR WOUNDS HEAL IMMEDIATELY, RIGHT?
USE MY POWERS IF YOU HAVE TO!
I'LL HOLD YOUR HAND! ANYTHING!!

If just one person...
"Tokage,"
"did you hurt yourself again?"
"Tokage..."
If...
"What a taboo child."
"He should just die."
"Hurry up and die!"

...YOU...
IDIOT...
If one person would tell me to live.
YOU'RE GETTING BLOOD ON YOUR UNIFORM AGAIN...

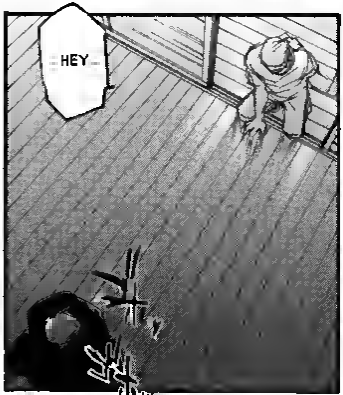
"Were they teasing you again?"
"Did you get hurt again?"
DON'T CRY.
STUPID
...then I could die happy at any time.
I CAN'T DIE.
those gentle hands of yours...
I'LL JUST FIND ANOTHER BODY
I'M ALREADY USED TO THIS
Kazura,

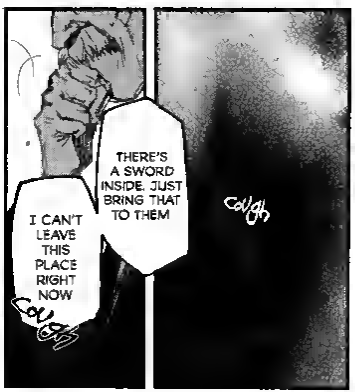
Kazura,
if you're not around, then there's no point.
"Tokage,"
"live!"
TOKAGE!
IT'S ENOUGH LEAVE.
YOU DON'T WANT YOUR SISTER'S BODY TO GET ANY MORE DAMAGED, DO YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

No point at all
THE ONE WHO'S HURTING THE ONE WHO'S BLEEDING
...ISN'T SIS! IT'S YOU!
TOKAGE!
DON'T DIE!!

HEY GRANDPA. IT'S GETTING PRETTY CRAZY OUT THERE
IS IT ALL RIGHT TO JUST LEAVE THEM LIKE THAT?

WHAT'S GOING ON?


-HEY-
(COUGH COUGH)

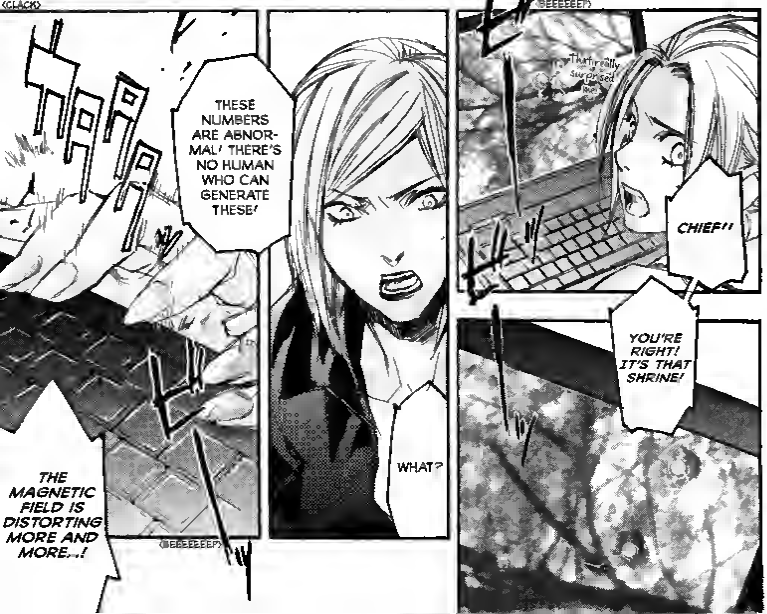

I CAN'T LEAVE THIS PLACE RIGHT NOW
COUGH
THERE'S A SWORD INSIDE. JUST BRING THAT TO THEM
COUGH

HEY!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, GRANDPA?!
I'M FINE.
I MUST...
PROTECT SHINOBU...
(CRACK)
HEAD PRIEST!

GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF!
YOUR BODY'S ...!
clink clink
roll roll roll
HEAD PRIEST!
(THUD)
FORGET ABOUT ME...
THE BARRIER!
I'LL CALL AN AMBULANCE...
(CRACK)
...NO!
SHINOBU'S ...!

SHINOBU?

(BEEP)
EEK!


(CLACK)
THESE NUMBERS ARE ABNORMAL! THERE'S NO HUMAN WHO CAN GENERATE THESE!
WHAT?
THE MAGNETIC FIELD IS DISTORTING MORE AND MORE...!
(BEEEEEEEP)
(BEEEEEEP)
That's really surprised me.
CHIEF!!
YOU'RE RIGHT! IT'S THAT SHRINE!

SNAP
SNAP
SNAP
SNAP

TSK...
SO HE COULDN'T STAND THE STRAIN?
USELESS SENILE FOOL.
The barrier's undone?
OLD MAN...
DID WE NOT MAKE IT IN TIME?!
...WHAT WAS THAT?!
THE BARRIER AROUND THE SHRINE HAS...!
(WHOOSH)

SLASH
I DIDN'T BRING IT ALONG JUST FOR DECORATION PURPOSES
OF COURSE
CHIEF,
ARE YOU REALLY PLANNING ON USING THAT?
click
SHING

THE GOD-SEALING BLADE, SHIRANUI *
I CAN'T ACT LEISURELY ABOUT THIS.
I'LL SEAL THE TOKAGE IN AN INSTANT WITH THIS.
*WHICH MEANS "UNKNOWN FLAME"
Click
AS EXPECTED.
JUST FROM HOLDING THIS, I GET EXHAUSTED
CHIEF...
THERE'S NO TIME LET'S HURRY.

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Scanner: Toshirodragoon
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Editor: Thuy Vy

CHAPTER NINETEEN

LOOKS LIKE IT DIDN'T LAST..
YOU... YOU DID SOMETHING TO THE OLD MAN!
WHO KNOWS
OW...
SHINOBU!!

SH
WHOO

That's...
HUH? THERE'RE NO PHOTOS FROM WHEN HE'S A KID.
SHINOBU'S BEEN SENSITIVE SINCE WAY BACK.
HE'S BEEN ABLE TO SEE LOTS OF THINGS SINCE HE WAS A KID.
IT'S A BARRIER FOR THAT CHILD.
USUALLY IT'D TAKE A MONTH TO COMPLETELY RECOVER.
MAYBE IT'S 'CAUSE SHINOBU'S POWERS ARE STRONG.
Is it because of the barrier...?
OUCH
appear

DUMP

WHAT ...?
tickle
KAZURA.
WHY ARE YOU CRYING ...?

So he wanted to hide this.
IT WAS YOU.
SHINOBU?
I couldn't have found her.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THAT OLD MAN...
HE TRICKED ME.
HA HA!
HAH!
HA HA!

COUGH
COUGH
HEAD PRIEST!
COUGH
...NO...
I MUST PROTECT HIM!
COUGH
SHINOBU...
Did I get carried away by my emotions?
When I saw that scar, I should have realized.
His powers were too strong. I knew that one day, fate would make him suffer.
THAT BOY...
IS INNOCENT!

I didn't want to make him bear any burden!
WHY?
...EH?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
CRUNCH
WHAT DID YOU ...?

"You really don't know?"
WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON?
Know what?
WHAT DID YOU SAY I WAS?!
"If you don't, then that's fine."
THROB
Shatter
EXPLAIN!!
THERE'S NO MORE TIME...
YOUR BLOOD WHEN YOU TALK...
THERE'S A RAZOR THERE, RIGHT?
Roll
T-THERE IS ONE...

SHINOBU,
USE THAT TO KILL ME

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CHAPTER TWENTY

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Editors: schlee & Galletta
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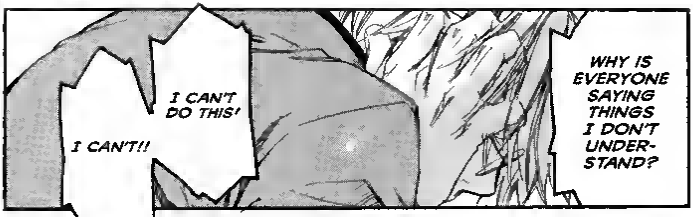
WHA...?
SHINOBU
IT'S FINE.
JUST KILL ME WITH THAT.

WHAT?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
KILL? THERE'S NO WAY I CAN...
THEN THE CURSE WILL END.
EVEN IF YOU CAN'T DO IT.
I DON'T GET WHAT YOU'RE SAYING!
WHY DO I HAVE TO...?!
WHAT?

MY LIFE...
CRUNCH
WAS ORIGINALLY YOURS KAZURA'S.
YOU CAN DO IT, I'M SURE
KILL ME.
I DON'T ..
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ALL OF A SUDDEN?!
SHINOBU,
IF THIS BODY BECOMES UNUSABLE THEN EVERY-THING WILL JUST REPEAT ITSELF.

I DID DRAG YOU INTO THIS, BUT TO THINK I WAS ACTUALLY RIGHT ON THE MARK.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE...
WHO CAN END THIS CURSE.
N-
NO!
I'LL GIVE THIS BODY BACK TO YOU.
YOU'LL BE HAPPY THEN, RIGHT?
NO!
Clatter
I CAN'T DO IT!

THERE'S NO SIN...
I CAN'T...
THIS BODY HAS ALREADY DIED ONCE.
STOP SAYING SUCH SELFISH THINGS!


I CAN'T DO THIS!
I CAN'T!!
WHY IS EVERYONE SAYING THINGS I DON'T UNDER-STAND?

THERE'S NO WAY HE CAN DO THIS, IS THERE?
THAT'S RIGHT.
THERE'S NO WAY—
SHINOBU, I'M BEGGING YOU...

GRAB
KAJIMA!
AH!
THAT DAMN OLD MAN LOOKS LIKE HE WAS AT LEAST ABLE TO BUY ME SOME TIME
IF I KILL HIM HERE,
THEN YOU'LL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO GO ON AND CONTINUE TO LIVE
SQUEEZ
UGH..
KNOW YOUR PLACE, TOKAGE!
YOU BASTARD !!

YOU WERE SO CLOSE!
DID YOU THINK YOU WERE FORGIVEN?
DID YOU THINK THIS WAS THE END?
RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW,
YOU SHALL FALL INTO DESPAIR AGAIN
OVER
AND OVER AGAIN
...?

YOU NEVER DID MANAGE TO FIND HER, DID YOU?
FIND KAZURA

WHAT...?
...?
HA HA!
AH HA HA HA HA! DID YOU?!

DID YOU SERIOUSLY THINK THAT YOU HADN'T FOUND HER ONCE IN ALL THESE EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS?
UGH...
EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE ONLY LOOKING FOR JUST ONE PERSON?!
I GOT IN THE WAY EVERY SINGLE TIME!
YOU'RE HILARIOUS, TOKAGE.

YOU'RE AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LAY YOUR HANDS...
ON OFFERINGS TO A GOD
YOU'RE MY *WARNING* TO *OTHERS*.
WAS IT LONG...
FOR YOU?
WAS IT PAINFUL,
DYING SO MANY TIMES?

HA HA!
AH HA HA...
...HA HA!
SQUEEZE
YOU'RE A FOOL, TOKAGE
YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD BREAK THE CURSE WITH JUST THAT?
YOU ENTERTAINED ME MORE THAN I EXPECTED!

A GOD HAS ABSOLUTE POWER!
THERE'S NO SALVATION FOR THOSE FATES WHO GO AGAINST THIS!
IT'S NOT A CURSE THAT CAN BE UNDONE!
TOKAGE
I'M NOT PLAYING ALONG WITH YOUR PERSONAL GRUDGES ANYMORE
SILENCE!
LET GO OF SHINOBU
I WILL END "TOKAGE" HERE AND NOW.

CAN YOU KILL HER?
THE PERSON WHO WAS THE OWNER OF THAT BODY WAS SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU, RIGHT?
...
But..!
SQUEEZE
LET GO!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO IF I LET YOU GO?
This is bad...
cough cough cough
TOKAGE!
PLEASE END THIS
This body is at its limits..!
SHINOBU

SLAM
thud
thud
LET GO OF SHINOBU
YOU WON'T GET OFF EASY EITHER, IF YOU KILL A HUMAN OF FLESH AND BLOOD...
rustle
THE HUMANS ARE GATHERING
TO CAPTURE YOU
THIS *TIME*, SUFFER YOUR *SIN* FOR ALL *ETERNITY*...
...IN THE *HELL* CREATED BY *HUMANS!*

I AM SAKAKI ON THE MAIN TEAM FROM THE SUPERNATURAL DISASTER COUNTERMEASURE OFFICE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEPARTMENT!
GIVE UP~

WHAT IS THIS...?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
DAMN...
OF ALL TIMES...

YOUR VAIN STRUGGLES...
END HERE AS WELL
IT'S TOO BAD.
SHING
TOKAGE!
YOU'VE GOTTEN QUITE WEAK.
CRUNCH
HOWEVER, I AM NOT ONE...
WHO WOULD TAKE THIS INTO CONSIDER-ATION
THAT'S RIGHT, WOMAN!

NOW, HURRY!
SEAL TOKAGE WITH THAT BLADE!
SHING
Who is that boy?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME
No, that's not the problem right now

(RAISE)
STOP!
(CLASH)
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, TOKAGE?!
RUN!
MOVE
I WILL RETURN THE BODY TO YOU
I'M ONLY REMOVING WHAT'S INSIDE.

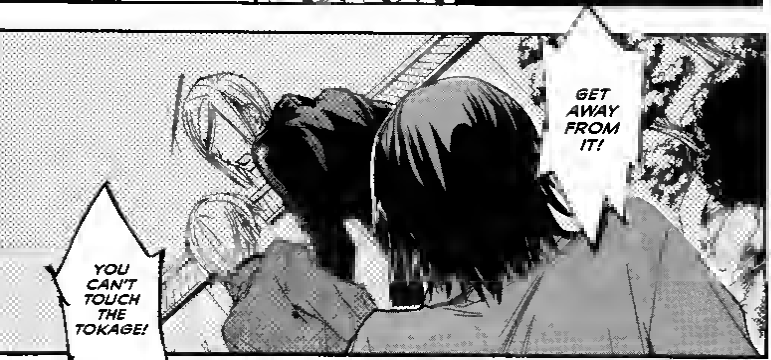
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU HAVE NO IDEA JUST HOW DANGEROUS TOKAGE IS.
JUST THE RECOIL FROM THE CURSE ON THE TOKAGE HAS DROWNED AN ENTIRE VILLAGE.
THERE'S A POSSIBILITY THAT THE SAME WILL HAPPEN HERE!
THAT'S NOT TRUE!
IT'S NOT TOKAGE'S FAULT!!
KIDS WHO DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON SHOULD GET OUT OF THE WAY!
IT'S DANGEROUS!

YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING YOU WANT TO HER JUST BECAUSE SHE'S ALREADY DEAD!
SHE'S BLEEDING, AND SHE IS HURT FROM ALL OF HER WOUNDS!
(THUD)
SHE'S JUST LIKE A HUMAN HERE!

SHINOBU
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
YOU'RE ALWAYS BEING BEATEN UP!
(CRASH)
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO EXPLAIN TO KIDS...
AH!

YOU CAN'T EVEN HEAL YOURSELF WITHOUT MY POWERS!
DON'T SAY YOU WANT TO DIE AND STUFF LIKE THAT!
How cruel
GRAP
Such a fool.
DON'T SAY, "KILL ME!"
TELL ME THAT YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT ME!

HA HA...
DON'T SOUND ALL GRAND TRYING TO PERSUADE ME WHEN YOU'RE JUST A KID...
Kazura...
Wrrlle
CRUNCH
BUT ... THERE'S NO MORE TIME.
This life you gave me...


GET AWAY FROM IT!
YOU CAN'T TOUCH THE TOKAGE!

CLATTER
Shhh

SHE

WHOOSH

SHINOBU!
splatter
splatter
splatter

HA HA!
HA HA HA HA!
YOU! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE ...?!
IT'S POINT-LESS.
HE CAN'T BE SAVED.
KURI-YAMA! CALL AN AMBU-LANCE!
HA HA HA HA HA!
(WHOOSH)
BECAUSE HUMANS ALL DIE SO EASILY!
YOU BASTARD!
(WHOOSH)
YOU'VE JUST LOST ANOTHER CHANCE TO ESCAPE YOUR CURSE!!
crackle
IT'S JUST TOO BAD, TOKAGE!
Hachi
crackle

EVEN IF I DISAPPEAR, YOU SHALL RECEIVE YOUR JUST PUNISHMENT!
(WHOOSH)
SUFFER FOR ALL OF ETERNITY!

(ROAR)
UNGH...
Is this the end to someone who has broken the laws ?
(FWHOOO)

CRACK
THUD
UNBELIEV-ABLE...
SO IT WAS USING THE HUMAN'S BODY AS A MEDIUM ?
CHIEF...
KURI-YAMA! THE BOY...
IT'S NO GOOD... THE BLEEDING IS HORRIBLE
AT THIS RATE, HE'LL...

SPLURT
"Tokage, live."

"Tokage..."

"...don't let anyone else get a hold of me"

Scanner: Ioshirodragon
Translator: Terracannon876
Editor: Huyvu & Alliera
Proofreader: Sophendolbol
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FINAL CHAPTER

SHINOBU!
WHERE'S THE EMERGENCY TEAM?! HURRY AND PROP HIM UP!
HAVE THEM PREPARE A BLOOD TRANSFUSION!
IT'S NO GOOD. HIS CAROTID ARTERY HAS BEEN CUT.
DAMN IT! HOW COULD A CIVILIAN HAVE GOTTEN INVOLVED IN THIS!
HURRY THE STRETCHER!!
FASTER!

GRAB
MOVE
YOU! WHAT ARE YOU—
TURN
WAIT
He's already starting to turn cold

RIP
YOU THINK I'LL JUST LET YOU DIE POINTLESSLY IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
Kazura.
Kazura!
!!
JUST HOW MUCH DO YOU THINK I HAVE LOOKED FOR YOU?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
ARE YOU PLANNING ON ENTERING THIS BOY'S BODY NEXT?
MOVE
I'M LETTING HIM..
EAT MY FLESH.

GRAB
STOP THIS,
TOKAGE!
YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE THAT TOKAGE FLESH BEING A CURE- ALL IS JUST FOLKLORE!
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING, DOING THAT?!
"Save Papa!"
"You'd have to eat its flesh."
"Make it so Papa won't die!"
I DON'T HAVE ANY SUCH POWERS.
BUT THERE'RE NO OTHER POSSIBILI- TIES!
This...
"_Give Paper power_"

This is a spirit that has lived for eight hundred years?
"Tohaga,"
(FLINCH)
What is this?
"live on."
WHAT DO YOU UNDER-STAND?!
I'VE SPENT EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS JUST SITTING BY AND WATCHING OTHERS DIE!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF IT!

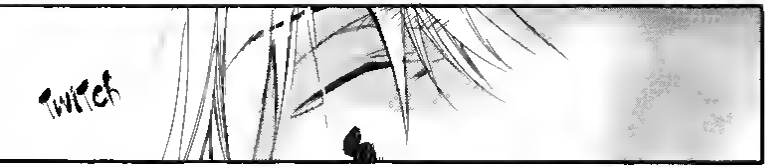
It's...
Hype
I DON'T HAVE ANY POWERS AT ALL
BUT IF HE REALLY IS KAZURA'S REINCARNATION
It's as though it were a child.
It would have all been fine if only you were there, Kazura.
GRIP
THEN SOMETHING MIGHT HAPPEN

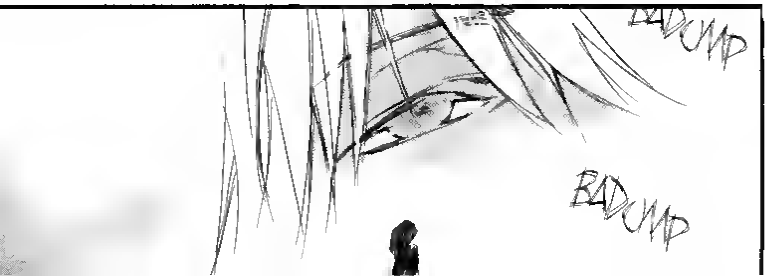
Why do you always leave me behind?
Come back.
This is your life.
drip
KAZURA
Come back.
SHINOBU

Come back!

I give it back to you now

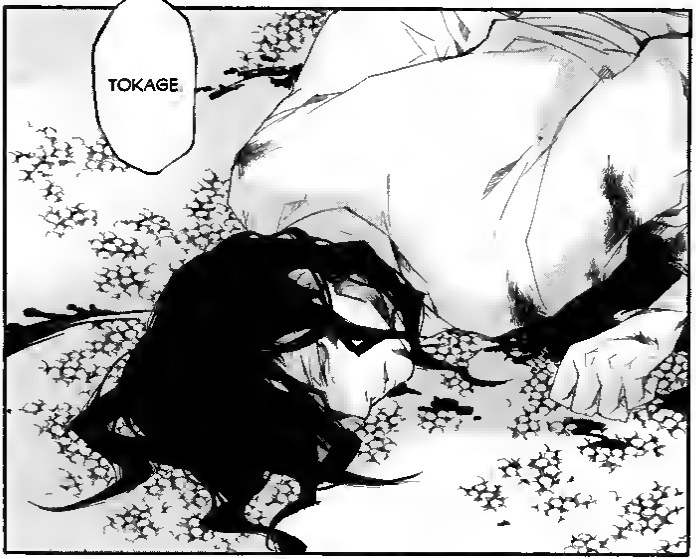
SWALLOW


twitch


BADUMP
BADUMP

Whoosh
TOKAGE ...?

HIS CAROTID ARTERY IS DAMAGED!
HURRY!
THE PARAMEDICS HAVE ARRIVED!
HURRY AND SEND THAT CHILD OVER TO THE HOSPITAL!
CLATTER
CLATTER
CLATTER
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE... I WAS SURE JUST NOW
He revived?!


TOKAGE

JUST WHAT DID YOU DO?
AFTER LETTING THAT BOY LIVE ... ARE YOU PLANNING TO BREAK YOUR CURSE?
DO WHAT-EVER YOU WANT. SEAL ME. ANY-THING.
cough
AS LONG AS SHINOBU S BEEN SAVED
I...
...I WANT TO BUT FOR SOME REASON I CAN'T LEAVE THIS BODY.
CRUNCH
HUH? WHAT IS THIS BAD FEELING?
EMERGENCY MEDICAL

CHIEF!
THE TOKAGE'S SIGNAL HAS DISAP-PEARED FROM THE SENSORS!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I DON'T KNOW BUT THE RESPONSES FROM THE MAGNETIC FIELD THAT WERE HERE JUST NOW ALL DISAP-PEARED
THE ABNORMAL VALUES AROUND THIS SHRINE HAVE ALSO GONE FLAT
YOU MEAN...
ACCORDING TO THESE NUMBERS, THE TOKAGE NO LONGER EXISTS AT THIS SHRINE

WHAT'S WRONG? DO IT...
POWER!
MORE!

twitch
UGH...
HUH?
WHERE AM I?

DRIP
DRIP
JUMP
MY NECK SUDDENLY FELT REALLY HOT...
AND THEN ... UM...
I'M PRETTY SURE KAJIMA CAME TO OUR HOUSE...
WHAT WAS I DOING?
I WONDER IF THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE HERE...
SHIP

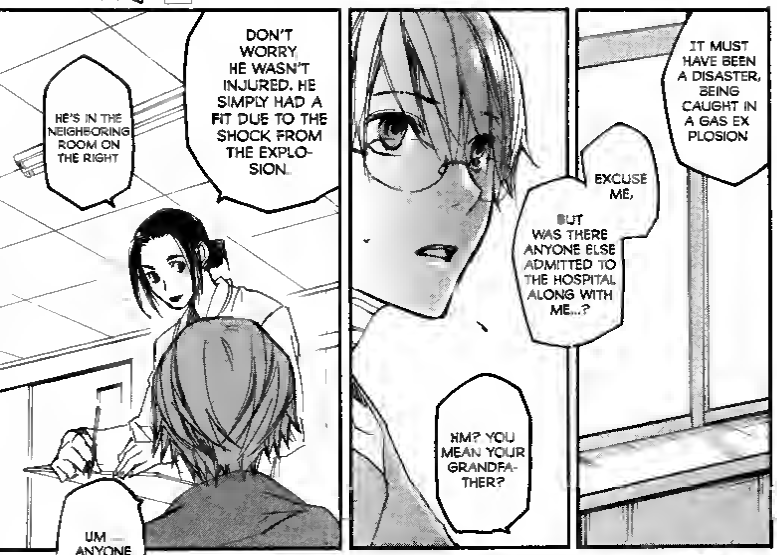
WHERE IS HE?

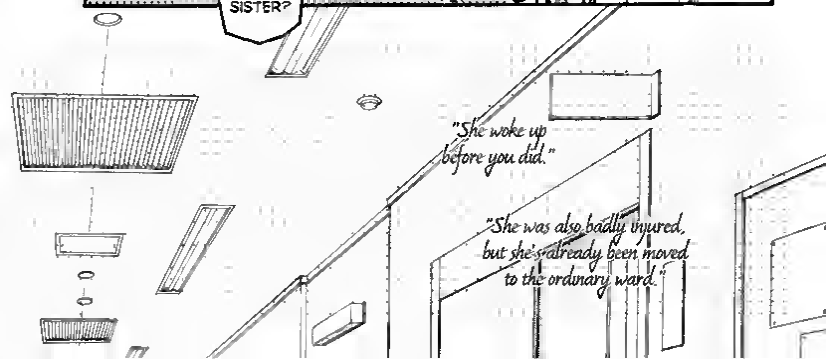
KAZURA...?
THERE'S A KID ALL THE WAY IN HERE...?
NO, I'M...
HUH?
YOU'RE INJURED
JUMP!

YOU...
YOU'RE NOT SCARED OF ME?
?
NOT REALLY ...
...
I SEE.
IT'S REALLY DARK HERE.
YOU CAN'T GET OUTSIDE?

IT'S ALL RIGHT
I CAN GET OUT NOW SHINOBU.

When I woke up, I was in the hospital.
The whole thing was made out to be a gas explosion to the public.
I WAS REALLY SURPRISED WHEN MS. SAKAKI CAME RUNNING IN WITH A BLOODY CHILD IN HER ARMS!
IT'S A GOOD THING YOUR WOUND WAS SHALLOW AND YOUR CAROTID ARTERY WASN'T CUT.
YOU STILL CAN'T MOVE TOO MUCH, THOUGH.
HM.
THERE ARE NO ABNORMALITIES


DON'T WORRY. HE WASN'T INJURED. HE SIMPLY HAD A FIT DUE TO THE SHOCK FROM THE EXPLO-SION.
HE'S IN THE NEIGHBORING ROOM ON THE RIGHT
IT MUST HAVE BEEN A DISASTER, BEING CAUGHT IN A GAS EX PLOSION
EXCUSE ME, BUT WAS THERE ANYONE ELSE ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL ALONG WITH ME...?
HM? YOU MEAN YOUR GRANDFA-THER?
UM — ANYONE ELSE...?
OH,
YOU MEAN YOUR OLDER SISTER?


"She woke up before you did."
"She was also badly injured, but she's already been moved to the ordinary ward."

©LATTE
TOKAGE
...?

It's like the first time I met the Tokage
PLOP
At that time...
...I waited and waited, like what I'm doing now,
for Sis to open her eyes.

ha
dump
Her heartbeat.
HEY THERE YOU'RE HEAVY.

ARE
ARE YOUR WOUNDS HEALING?
AH!
JUST NOW
HER HEART BEAT
SORR—
NOT AT ALL.
HUH?
MY WOUNDS HEAL SLOWLY.
AND I CAN'T TURN INTO A MALE ANYMORE
MY RIGHT HAND'S HEALING BUT IT KEEPS PRICKLING

AND MY HEARTBEAT'S SO FREAKING LOUD EVEN WHEN I SLEEP
IT'S NORMAL
The curse of immortality.
IT'S SO ANNOYING, BEING HUMAN
TOKAGE,
THAT'S NORMAL FOR A HUMAN

It was there
NECK
but what was here right now was
I SEE
SHE FEELS WARM
YEAH.
IS YOUR NECK ALL RIGHT?
HUH?

But isn't that what it means to be alive?
AUGH, BUT JEEZ, DAMN IT.
I'VE FORGOTTEN WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO HURT EVERYWHERE

AFTER SUCH A BIG RUCKUS IT SOMEHOW FEELS LIKE IT WAS RESOLVED TOO QUICKLY
WE DON'T KNOW IF IT'S BEEN RESOLVED BUT WHAT WE DO KNOW IS THAT TOKAGE'S SIGNAL HAS DISAPPEARED, SO THERE'S NO WORK.
BUT IT'S A GOOD THING CHIEF GOT AWAY WITH JUST A PAY CUT.
NO, IT'S NOT!
Although the same thing happened to us, too
No! My bonus!

It seems like Kashima remembered nothing, and I didn't really talk to him after what happened.
HEY MIYA, YOU'VE BEEN COMING TO SCHOOL EVERYDAY LATELY
IT'S NOTHING REALLY JUST LIKE NORMAL
And then, on the game next week...
Really?
It's like... nothing happened.

It's not like anything changed from before
The same boring day just repeats over and over again
HUH?
DIDN'T YOU JUST GET BACK?
ARE YOU GOING SOMEWHERE SO SOON?

GOING TO SEE GRAMPS
THERE'S THE LAUNDRY, TOO
WHAT? I CAN DO THAT MYSELF!
YOU'RE INJURED
THE DOCTOR SAID HE CAN BE DISCHARGED NEXT WEEK.
THAT'S GREAT
I DIDN'T KNOW GRANDFATHER'S HEART WAS BAD.
EVEN THOUGH I ALWAYS LIVED WITH HIM

THE OLD MAN HID IT FROM YOU, RIGHT?
YEAH, BUT STILL...
IT'S BECAUSE I WASN'T INTERESTED IN WHAT WAS GOING ON AROUND ME...
I'M SORRY I CAN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING...
ABOUT THE PERSON YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT
IT'S FINE.
YOU'RE NOT KAZURA, ANYWAY.
TOKAGE...

...DID YOU...
...HER...?
OH? WHAT'S THIS?
Eh hee hee!
YOU JEALOUS? CONCERNED?
S-SHUT UP...
AFTER GETTING MIXED UP IN ALL THAT, THERE'S NO WAY I CAN'T—
MY SISTER
Don't get close to me!

KAZURA WAS MY OLDER SISTER.
EH?
I don't know if the curse was really lifted or not. I'm still only a bystander - like before.
IN THE PAST
YOU JUST SIMPLY HAVE TO LIVE THE WAY YOU WANT TO LIVE

A story that would continue on until the very end.

Tohage
The End

Tokage

Oh, is that so! You mean I can't go back to being a guy anymore?!
Well, not like I care. Humph!
But you're happily wearing women's clothing.
This monthly serialization was hectic from the start, but somehow it managed to finish. Many thanks to all those who read all the way through, to the editors who I've imposed upon so much, to the editor-in-chief, and to my friends who helped me. See you again somewhere!
Yuki Hamada
2007.11